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Mr. Wieland

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F750009-1101

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

TELEPHONE/

DATE: October 25, 1957

SUBJECT: Junta-Ydígoras Truce in Guatemala.

PARTICIPANTS: The Honorable Edward J. Sparks, Ambassador to Guatemala;
Mr. C. Allan Stewart, Acting Director, Office of Middle American Affairs.

COPIES TO: American Embassy, Guatemala; ARA (2); MED/PM; ARA/P; OLI (2)

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 6/4/75
PER Fumines OFFICE ARA
FADRC FOI CASE NO. 5-B-301

By pre-arrangement, Ambassador Sparks telephoned at 9:55 p.m., the call being put through to my home. He said that after a meeting of about three hours, the Military Junta and General Ydígoras had reached agreement on a 24-hour truce to permit the Junta to attempt to work out a plan that might satisfy Ydígoras' demand that he be declared President. Ambassador Sparks said that the General insists that he be declared President in any manner that the Junta can legally devise, presumably by congressional action. General Ydígoras does not want another election and one of the reasons he advanced is that allegedly the expense of the previous election of October 20 exhausted his party's funds. Ambassador Sparks remarked that a plan satisfactory to the General would "require more imagination" than most people have.

The agreement for a truce contained four points:

1. All Ydígoras supporters would get off the streets and out of public places for 24 hours.

2. During this period the Junta would attempt to resolve the problem.

3. No anti-communists would demonstrate during the period. Any demonstrators would be considered as communists and treated as such.

4. The Junta affirmed its anti-communist nature and stated that it had no connection with any political group.

After General Ydígoras spoke to a large crowd waiting in front of the National Palace, its members dispersed and shortly thereafter calm returned to the city. As a result of the tension, stores had closed, the railroad was barely maintaining service, there was no bus service and as of the moment the city gave the impression of being completely deserted.

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The Partido Revolucionario had planned to stage a demonstration in the afternoon but called it off pending an exchange of views with the Junta.

Ambassador Sparks said the two moot questions at the time are whether there will be new elections and whether the Partido Revolucionario will be permitted to register and participate in new elections.

Ambassador Sparks said that he greatly appreciated receiving the Department's telegram No. 217, contents of which are now known in the highest circles.

The Ambassador explained that press reports might mention the activities of Embassy service attachés in the meeting between the Junta and Ydígoras. He said that Colonel Cubbison used his good offices in arranging for the meeting, adding that without his assistance Ydígoras would not have met with the Junta. The Ambassador declared that he had authorized this action on humanitarian grounds, given the explosive situation that prevailed before the meeting.

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